Iron County Register

BY ELI D. AKE.

IRONTON, - - - MISSOURI

MY LITTLE NEIGHBOR.

You came to live near us
One bonnie spring day;
The next sunshiny morning—
A morning in May—
I heard you a-gardening
Over the way.

But between, like Fate's battlement,
Grim rose the wall,
And you were so little,
And I was not tall—
Should I shout? Would you answer?
What name could I call?

I hated the man
Who had built the wall there.
I climbed with the aid
Of a venerable chair—
A diminutive Romeo
Scaling your stair.

The ledge I laid over,
Ah, such a wee thing!
Like a restless white butterfly
Light on the wing;
Hair gold as the primrose
That blossomed in spring.

Your rake dropped, your sun-hat slipped
Off you bright head.
"Are you the boy next door?"
You solemnly said.
I nodded, slid o'er the wall,
Radiant and red.

Oh, my wife, in Life's garden
We linger to-day;
Many snows, many May-blooms,
Have kissed gold to gray,
Since I wooed my wee neighbor
Over the way.

—*K. Temple More, in Our Continent.*

UGLY AND STUPID.

"Lady Flora has a headache, and can not act to-night! Gracious goodness! What are we to do? The airs these fine ladies give themselves is simply abominable."

The energy with which these words were uttered would have led a listener to suppose that the speaker was a radical merchant from one of the manufacturing towns in the north, instead of being one of the richest, handsomest, idlest and most universally-petted young men in London, who generally assumed a blase air of liking nothing, though occasionally, as at the present moment, the natural excitability of his nature would assert itself.

"If you are so severe," said one of the two pretty women he addressed, who was his hostess, "we won't any of us act, and then where will you be?"

"Freed from a dilemma. If none of you acted, the thing would have to be thrown up. You would really oblige me by carrying out that threat."

"As we don't wish to oblige you," she retorted, laughing, "we won't carry it out, though I am afraid after so much unusual excitement on your part you will be too exhausted to act yourself. It was so unnecessary, too, as we have found a substitute for Lady Flora. Miss Manners will take the part."

"Miss Manners?" he said inquiringly.

"Yes. Now don't pretend you don't know who I mean. You took her in to dinner last night."

"O! That girl. My dear Mrs. Burnes, she is so ugly and so stupid! And though it is a small part, that any fool could take, still it does require a certain amount of intelligence."

"As you hardly uttered a word to her the while," began the other lady, but broke off abruptly; for on the utterance of his paradoxical statement the young man turned round to find the object of it close behind him; so close that it was impossible to hope she had not heard every word.

Arthur Hamilton was not given to embarrassment, but at this moment he was absolutely speechless. Miss Manners was not handsome, perhaps, but her dignified self-possession under these trying circumstances proved her to be a woman of character, if not of brilliant intellect, and a slight flush on her sallow face showed that her self-possession was not the result of stolid stupidity. With scarcely a pause she took up the thread of the conversation.

"Lady Flora seems certain that she will not be able to act to-night. It appears that there is no one available to fill her place but me. I never have acted, but I fancy in so small a part I can scarcely do much harm. I suppose it is not very difficult?" she added, appealing to Arthur, with a quiet unconcern, in which it would have needed a very keen observer to have detected the malice. And Arthur was, as he afterward said, too "completely staggered" to detect anything. "O, no, it's not very difficult," he stammered, and muttering something about the last touches to the stage, he escaped.

"Poor Mr. Hamilton! this sudden caprice on the part of Lady Flora is rather hard on him as stage manager," said Miss Manners, as he left the room.

"Yes," returned Mrs. Burnes, vaguely; "but we must leave you in peace to learn your part. We have a final rehearsal after luncheon." And she and Mrs. Finsbury departed, hardly less glad than Arthur to make their escape.

Gertrude Manners stood for a moment, with a half bitter, half disdainful smile on her face, but something like tears in her eyes. Then she walked to the fireplace and took a deliberate survey of her features in the glass over the chimney-piece. She was not handsome, but a close observer would hardly have sat beside her all through a long dinner and decided that she was ugly. Her large hazel eyes were variable in their shades as the sea under an April sky, her whole face was expressive and mobile; moreover, her figure was tall and graceful. Nevertheless, she did not appear conscious of these advantages; for, after a moment of keen scrutiny, she sighed and said, half aloud, as she turned away: "Well, I am plain, but"—she glanced at the play-book in her hand, and a bright, confident smile broke over her face—"we shall see."

At three o'clock the corps dramatique assembled on the stage. It consisted of the hostess, Mrs. Burnes, a clever, piquante little woman; Mrs. Finsbury, one of the beauties of the day; Gertrude Manners; Arthur, who played the hero, besides being stage manager and general director; Mr. Finsbury, and two somewhat vapid young men, whose ideas of acting were of the most misty kind, but who took any amount of snubbing and tutoring with perfect good temper. Gertrude's part was that of heroine in so far as that she was the hero's lady love; but she had little to do beyond standing about, perhaps the most difficult thing of all to do gracefully, and to make a few tender speeches to Arthur, which she did in much the same tone as a child learning to read. Arthur's artistic soul was too much for him, and forgetting all awkward circumstances, he exclaimed: "This will never do, Miss Manners. Can't you be more empressee, more tender, as if you worshiped the very ground I tread on?" and, looking into her face to give emphasis to his words, he found it lit up with suppressed laughter.

"I am afraid I am not a good enough actress for that," she replied, quietly.

At half-past eight the drawing-room was filled to overflowing. The curtain had risen, and the play proceeded most satisfactorily.

Arthur quite justified the eulogiums that were indiscriminately heaped upon him. Mr. Finsbury, as the heavy swell, was painstaking and accurate, if a little heavier than was absolutely necessary. The vapid young men, one as the villain, the other as supplementary hero, acquitted themselves creditably enough. The hostess kept the audience genuinely amused by her clever impersonation of a scheming widow, while Mrs. Finsbury made so fair a picture in her every attitude that her lack of histrionic power was readily forgiven by the spectators.

And Gertrude? Gertrude, carefully got up by good-natured Mrs. Finsbury, really did, with the aid of darkened eyelashes, rouge, powder, and becomingly-arranged hair, look almost pretty. She had little to say, but was on the stage a good deal; and here her natural self-possession stood her in good stead, she was perfectly at her ease. But beyond this, she contrived to throw into every word and gesture the expression of her deep interest in the hero. She followed the dialogue, her face betraying every emotion that it called up. In a word, she not only made something, but a good deal out of her part; made herself one of the objects of interest in the piece; and once, in uttering the conventional protestations of undying affection to her lover, she clasped her hands on his arm, looking into his face with a passionate fervor of which she was herself unconscious, her eyes glowing, her lips quivering, her face and voice expressing such an intensity of devotion that Arthur was startled into forgetting his answer.

It was over. Dancing was the next event on the programme, and people danced and talked it over in the complimentary style usual on such occasions. "How good Mr. Hamilton was." "How lovely Mrs. Finsbury looked." "How cleverly Mrs. Burnes acted." But one and all were honestly enthusiastic over Gertrude. "She is a born actress." "She was wonderful." "It was so clever of her to make so much of that small part." And to each and all Gertrude returned the same quiet smile of thanks. Arthur received his laurels with less than his usual easy self-complacency. He was distrait and even irritable. He was the only person in the house who did not congratulate Gertrude on her success. He never went near her. At the end of the evening, however, when nearly everyone not of the house party was gone, and two more dances must close the entertainment, he found himself close to Gertrude. He glanced at her, and, with a hesitation that those who knew him best would have supposed him incapable of, asked her to dance. All her rouge and eye-black washed off, she was once more to most people a sallow, uninteresting girl. But he could not forget those deep, earnest eyes, the intense fervor of her voice, the passionate emotion expressed in her gesture. Even now, looking at her face, he said to himself that her eyes were beautiful. If she loved would they so deepen, and her tones take that thrilling tenderness? He roused himself from these speculations, which he reflected were foolish, to listen to her words, which were commonplace enough, and uttered in tones not the least thrilling or tender, though they were clear and soft, as he might have discovered the night before at dinner, if he had chosen to notice it. He remarked it now, however, and connected them indissolubly with the passion they were capable of expressing.

"Do you know you are a born actress," he said, when at last they arrived at the inevitable subject of the theatricals.

She smiled, not without a suspicion of triumph in her eyes.

"I don't know that exactly, but I have always felt sure I could act."

"Then how is it that you have never tried before?"

"I suppose it never occurred to any one to suppose me capable of acting."

"The people you have lived with must have been fools."

She looked at him and laughed, after which his share in the conversation was confined to monosyllables.

And yet she bore him no malice. Through the days that followed she accepted his attentions with perfect ease and composure, was always agreeable and amiable, and never seemed the least aware that any notice from the fastidious and much-admired Arthur Hamilton was a great honor. No deeper intention on his part ever occurred to her.

The party had broken up. There was no one left but Arthur, Gertrude and her father. Arthur entering the drawing-room about five o'clock found Gertrude there alone, kneeling on the hearthrug reading by the fire, for the daylight had failed and the lamps had not yet been brought. The flickering flames threw a rosy glow on her face, and lent an unwonted luster to her hair; her attitude was graceful; altogether she made a pretty picture. To his eyes so pretty a one that he paused to look at her with so much earnestness that he was quite startled when, becoming conscious, she looked up and spoke. He was at once seized with the sense of discomfiture that always assailed him in her presence, and which was the more uncomfortable from being a sensation to which he was quite unaccustomed.

She, on the contrary, was perfectly cool, and not the least aware that he was not.

"How dreary it always is," she remarked, "to be the last remnant of a large party."

"Yes," he said, absently; then added, hesitatingly: "You are not going to-morrow, are you? I heard Mrs. Burnes ask your father to stay."

"She did ask us, but we can not manage it. We are positively going to-morrow."

"You are—I—I—wonder if I shall ever see you again."

"I don't know," she said, indifferently. "The world is very small. It is curious how one does knock up against people."

"One does—yes — certainly. Miss Manners, in case I never should see you again, will you overlook the shortness of our acquaintance and let me tell you something."

"Certainly," she said, with a slight accent of surprise.

"I—I don't know whether I ought to allude to it, but I must begin by doing so. I know you must have heard something I said of you, something utterly idiotic and senseless, like the fool I was, but——"

"Yes," she interrupted, quietly; "we need not go back to that now."

"If you knew," he went on unheeding, "how bitterly I have regretted that foolish speech, how utterly I retract it, how, however, I might, in my ignorant presumption, have chosen to regard you then, you are to me now the one woman in the world, your face the most beautiful, your every attribute the most perfect. It is now the most earnest hope I ever entertained that you will some day be my wife—but—I love you!"

A sudden flame leaping up revealed Gertrude's face, on which neither confusion, agitation, pleasure, nor displeasure were depicted; nothing but the most intense and genuine astonishment. The flame dropped again; the room was nearly dark, and in the darkness the answer sounded clear and composed.

"I am grateful to you, Mr. Hamilton, for the compliment you pay me, and am sorry to pain you, but it can not be."

She rose as she spoke as if to leave the room, but he detained her by an imploring gesture.

"One moment, Miss Manners. Is there no hope for me—have I offended you irrecoverably by my conceited folly?"

There was some amusement perceptible in the soft, distinct tones which answered:

"That has nothing to do with it. My vanity was hurt for a moment perhaps, but less hurt than if I had heard such a speech from a person whose opinion I valued."

There was a pause after this, and then he said meekly:

"At any rate you forgive me?"

"Quite," she answered, impatiently. "I am not a child, or a fool, to bear malice for foolish words that were never intended to reach my ears." Then she added, gently: "You have atoned for them sufficiently to satisfy the most unreasonable of women."

"But you have too poor an opinion of me ever to care for me?"

"No, I never said that," she answered, kindly. "I like you—I do, indeed—as an acquaintance; but——"

The footmen's entrance at this moment with the lamp put a summary stop to the interview, and Gertrude prudently avoided any possibility of its recurrence by walking out of the room.

One hot day in July, about six months later, three people were riding slowly up Hay Hill. Of these, one was Arthur Hamilton, the other two, Mr. and Mrs. Finsbury. The lady was as pretty and charming as ever, her husband stolid and somewhat bored, while Arthur wore his most listless London air, spoke in the most languid of tones, and appeared wholly unimpressed by his companion's smiles.

"Do you know who that is?" she said, as she bowed to a tall figure in black, who was coming down the hill.

"No," he answered, "I did not look at her."

"Do you remember Miss Manners, that plain girl who acted at Friar's Park, that you got into such a scrape with, and devoted yourself to afterward by way of making up for it? It was wrong of you, for she might have token your attentions for meaning more than they did. I don't suppose she is much accustomed to attention."

"Miss Manners! Yes, I remember her," he said; and something in his tone struck Mrs. Finsbury for the moment. She gave him a curious glance, but, reading nothing in his face, forgot it, and went on.

"She has just lost her father, poor girl. He was the only relation she had in the world, and he has left her penniless. She has some wild idea of going on the stage, which is foolish, as it does not follow that because a girl can act well in drawing-room theatricals she will ever make anything by it as a profession. However——"

"I think I'll go and speak to her," Arthur broke in, with the sudden impetuosity which always contrasted so oddly with his assumed indifference to everything; and before Mrs. Finsbury and her husband could speak he had turned his horse and galloped down the hill. He caught Miss Manners up in Berkeley Square, had dismounted, and was at her side before she was aware of his vicinity. A faint tinge of color rose to her cheeks as he spoke to her.

"I am so grieved to hear of your troubles," he began, hurriedly, but with such genuine sympathy in his tones that the girl turned away her head to recover composure before answering him. Arthur had probably had no distinct idea of hurrying after her, except the pleasure of seeing her for a moment; but the sight of her emotion put to flight any remnants of sense or self-control that were left him. Without considering for a moment time, place, or circumstances, walking beside her with his bridle over his arm, he began, ruthlessly:

"Miss Manners, it is eight months since I last saw you, and in all that time I have never ceased to think of you. I love you as much as ever: more than ever. Don't refuse to listen to me now. I can not bear to think of you battling with the world alone. Gertrude, won't you give me the right to shield you from all future cares?"

Two pretty girls riding home to luncheon with their father, bowed graciously to Arthur at this moment, wondering at the vacant stare with which he received their salutations. They would have wondered more could they have heard his conversation with "that plain girl in black."

For a moment Gertrude was silent, struggling with contending emotions. A sense of the absurdity of the thing and a sense of pain together disposing her to be hysterical. She conquered it, though her eyes filled with tears as she replied: "No, Mr. Hamilton; it can not be. I do not love you."

"But you would learn to love me," he urged.

She shook her head. "It would be wrong. It is a temptation, for I am very lonely, but—"

"Then marry me," he broke in, eagerly. "I only ask for the right to devote myself to you. You would learn to love me. I will take the risk."

If only the fine ladies who ran after this fastidious young man and took such infinite pains to secure his favor could have heard him!

"No," said Gertrude. "It is not for these motives one should marry." Then she added, kindly: "You are worthy of a better fate than to be married for the sake of your money. I hope you will find it some day."

He looked for a moment into her face, and knew it was hopeless.

"Forgive me for having troubled you," he said. "Only if ever you need a friend, think of me. I shall always deem it a privilege to serve you, no matter in how small a way. Will you remember this!"

"I will remember," she answered, softly. "Now, good-by."

"Will you come to the theater to-night, Hamilton, and see this new star they are making such a fuss about?"

And Arthur, who was staying for a day or two with a friend in New York, expressed his willingness to go anywhere his host wished to take him. As they were leaving the house, one of the children came flying down the stairs.

"Mr. Hamilton, I have made you a buttonhole, please take it."

Arthur turned with a smile to the little maiden as she continued: "I have tied it up with blue ribbon, my doll's best hair-ribbon." Whereupon she produced an exquisite white rosebud and bit of fern, tied with a narrow piece of common ribbon. It was not an improvement to the bouquet, and had decidedly an odd appearance in Arthur's coat. But Arthur was no longer the languid dandy he had once been. Handsome as ever, and considerably improved by the sensible, manly manner that had taken the place of the former affectation of perpetual boredom, he was a greater favorite than ever with the fair sex, but they received little encouragement to pet him now. To children he was always kind, and never for a moment dreamt of hurting this child's feelings by rejecting the ribbon. He kissed the donor, and assured her he felt much flattered.

The theater was hot and crowded. Arthur was tired from traveling and sight-seeing. He went to sleep directly he was in his seat, and was only aroused by the vociferous applause that greeted the star. He woke himself up to look at her, and at the first glance his heart stood still. She began to speak. There was no mistaking those clear, sweet tones, even under the trained stage intonation. It was indeed Gertrude, whom he had neither seen nor heard of since he had parted from her in Berkeley Square. Breathlessly he watched her every movement and listened to every word. She was a great actress, undoubtedly; she carried her audience with her in every emotion she portrayed. Her passion and fervor reduced them to tears one moment, at another her rippling laughter gladdened their hearts. Only Arthur neither laughed nor cried. To him she was not the heroine of the piece, whose vicissitudes of fortune he followed with eager interest. She was herself, the woman he loved; he did not know whether she were acting ill or well, hardly what words she was uttering. He only knew he was once more looking on the face, and listening to the voice that for five years had so persistently haunted his memory.

It was over. He could not tell whether she had seen him; indeed, till this moment, it had not occurred to him to wonder. Now, however, as in answer to repeated calls, she came before the curtain, he was seized with a wild desire to attract her attention. He took the little white rosebud out of his buttonhole, and threw it to her. In vain. A bouquet fell at the same moment, and his poor little flower lay unobserved near the footlights.

"Well, my good friend, do you mean to come away to-night?" asked his companion. Arthur started, then, collecting himself, explained that the actress was a former acquaintance of his, and suggested going round to the stage-door to see her. "You would not be admitted; she is never to be found behind the scenes."

So Arthur was compelled to wait till the next day, when, procuring her address, he started off to see her. She was at home, and met him with a vivid blush and a nervous flutter that was most unusual to her. Their greeting was commonplace enough, and when her color had faded, Arthur was not distracted by the exciting nature of the conversation from observing how time had dealt with her. There were silver lines in her hair that had surely no business to be there, and lines on her face that told of weary struggles. But the green hazel eyes were soft and expressive as ever, and the play of countenance even more varied. But she had lost her cool self-possession, a circumstance he remarked, and attributed to the same wear and tear that had lined her face and touched her hair with gray.

"May I congratulate you," he said, "on the success you have achieved."

"She smiled a little sadly. "Yes, I suppose I have succeeded; but—"

"But what?"

"But nothing. I was going to moralize on the emptiness of fame, only I thought better of it."

"Does it not satisfy you?" he said.

"Does anything in life ever quite satisfy?" she returned, smiling.

"But—but—am I impertinent to ask? —Are you happy?" She crimsoned, and he hastily added: "I mean—perhaps—you want—I mean——" and he floundered hopelessly.

"I don't want anything," she replied, quietly. "I never have wanted anything. Whenever I have been in trouble I have found kind friends."

"And I can not help you in any way? Ah, no; if you found friends when you were in trouble, you will not want for them now you have attained fame. But if you ever should —— Do you remember what I said to you once?"

"I remember," she returned, in a low voice.

"I am not going to torment you by repeating all that again, but ——" A sudden gesture on her part here passed unnoticed, for his eyes were fixed on the carpet. "Only if you ever want a friend, I am ready now as I was then. Good-bye, Miss Manners."

"Good-bye," she replied, very quietly, too much accustomed, perhaps, to his sudden impulses to wonder at this abrupt departure.

But, as he turned away, not looking where he was going, he knocked over a small table that stood near; and all the small nick-nacks upon it went rolling in different directions.

"I am so sorry," he said, as he stooped to pick them up. A little sandalwood carved box lay at his feet, and, in taking it up, he touched the spring. It flew open. Inside it lay a faded white rosebud, tied with a bit of blue ribbon. For a moment he stood bewildered. Then a great joy came over his face. He looked at her. With downcast eyes and crimson cheeks she stood silent and trembling. Down fell box and rosebud to the floor again.

"Gertrude! my Gertrude, at last!"

"Yes, I love you now," she confessed, a little time after. "I think I began to love you the moment you left my side that day in Berkeley Square, when I began to realize what I had lost. And, oh, Arthur! I am so tired of fame, and of rehearsing and acting, applause and bouquets, and all the excitement and weariness of it. Take me away from it all, Arthur."

Which he was quite ready to do at the earliest opportunity.—*Argosy.*

The Boundaries of Astronomy.

The star sweeps along through our system with stupendous velocity. Now there can be no doubt that if the star were permanently to retain this velocity it would in the course of time travel right across our system and after leaving our system would retreat into the depths of infinite space. Is there any power adequate to recall this star voyage to infinity? We know of none, unless it be the attraction of the stars or other bodies of our sidereal system. It, therefore, becomes a matter of calculation to determine whether the attraction of all the material bodies of our sidereal system could be adequate, even with universal gravitation, to recall a body which seems bent on leaving that system with a velocity of 200 miles per second. This interesting problem has been discussed by Professor Newcomb, whose calculations we shall here follow. In the first place we require to make some estimate of the dimensions of the sidereal system, in order to see whether it seems likely that this star can ever be recalled. The number of stars may be taken at 100,000,000, which is probably double as many as the number we can see with our best telescopes. The masses of the stars may be taken as on the average five times as great as the mass of the sun. The distribution of the stars is suggested by the constitution of the milky way. One hundred million stars are presumed to be disposed in a flat circular layer of such dimension that a ray of light would require 30,000 years to traverse one diameter. Assuming the ordinary law of gravitation, it is now easy to compute the efficiency of such an arrangement in attempting to recall a moving star.

The whole question turns on a certain critical velocity of twenty-five miles a second. If a star darts through the system we have just been considering with a velocity less than twenty-five miles a second, then, after that star had moved for a certain distance, the attractive power of the system would gradually bend the path of the star round, and force the star to return to the system. If, therefore, the velocities of the stars were under no circumstances more than twenty-five miles a second, then, supposing the system to have the character we have described, that system might be always the same. The stars might be in incessant motion, but they must always remain in the vicinity of our present system, and our whole sideral system might be an isolated object in space, just as our solar system is an isolated object in the extent of the sidereal system. We have, however, seen that for one star at all events the velocity is no less than two hundred miles a second. If this star dash through the system, then the attractions of all the bodies in the system will unite in one grand effort to recall the wanderer. This attraction must to some extent be acknowledged, the speed of the wanderer must gradually diminish as he recedes into space; but that speed will never be lessened sufficiently to bring the star back again. As the star retreats further and further the potency of the attraction will decrease, but, owing to the velocity of the star being over twenty-five miles a second, the attraction can never overcome the velocity; so that the star seems destined to escape. This calculation is, of course, founded on our assumption as to the total mass of the stars and other bodies which form our sidereal system. That estimate is founded on a liberal, indeed, a very liberal, interpretation of the evidence which our telescopes have afforded. But it may still fall short of the truth. There may be more than a hundred million stars in our system; their average weight may be more than our sun. But unless the assumption is enormously short of the truth, our inference can not be challenged.—*Prof. Ball, in the Contemporary Review.*

—Prof. Henry A. Ward, of Rochester, has taken a contract to purchase for the American Museum of Natural History, in Central Park, New York, the specimens of two valuable collections. One is to be a complete collection of the mammals and birds of North America, including some seven or eight hundred specimens, and its cost, to be defrayed by Morris K. Jessup, will be $10,000; the other will be a collection representing all the quadrumana of the world. About 300 mokeys will comprise the latter collection, the expense of which, $7,000, is provided for by Robert Colgate. It will take Prof. Ward upward of two years to make the collections.—*N. Y. Times.*

—Two children found a revolver at Mobile, and while quarreling over who should have possession of it, got into a scuffle, during which the weapon was discharged and one of the children fatally wounded.—*N. Y. Sun.*

SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY.

—During the past year about 4,000 patents applying electricity in some shape or manner have been granted.

—It was reported at the Nurserymen's Convention recently held at Rochester, N. Y., that nearly all the pear trees set out in the Western States are raised in New York.

—Machines are now made which will cut from a roll of wire, pins of the right length, head them, point them, polish them, sort them out with their points all one way and stick them into papers, or rolls, faster than one can count.—*St. Louis Globe.*

—It is said that very fine effects are produced on unfinished cast-iron by a mixture of petroleum with French yellow, the result being a fine bronze yellow, not liable to ordinary wear, and if applied hot, filling the pores of the metal, defying anything short of the file or planer tool to obliterate it.

—A new use for glass has recently been developed in its substitution for marble tops of tables and dressing cases. A Pittsburg, Pa., firm has turned out slabs of glass that are said to be a perfect imitation of the latter material, while they admit of decorations of various designs, both in form and color.

—The genius of the Yankee has come to the rescue of the horse suffering from a galled shoulder from the heat and ill shape of hard collars by inventing a collar from catkins, or flags, which grow in swamps. The cost is trifling, and it is said not only to prevent galling but will cure it, by adapting itself to any neck or shoulder, and is light, cool and cheap.—*Detroit Post.*

—A new explosive called "dynamogen" is claimed by its inventor, Dr. Petrie, of Vienna, to be superior in nearly every respect to gunpowder—it is cheaper, safer and more effective, while it contains no substance that can injure the guns. In view of the announcement of so many new and greatly superior explosives it seems a little singular that the old-fashioned gunpowder—first used at a period so remote that its origin can not be traced—should be the chief dependence of modern artillery.

—The proportion of salt in the water of the ocean varies greatly in different localities. M. de la Grye has made a series of observations on the subject, in which—among many interesting results—he has found that the saltness diminishes rapidly as a coast is approached, due, probably, to the freshening by rivers discharging into the sea. The salt also lessens on the approach of icebergs. These facts would seem to have an important bearing on navigation, as in bad weather tests of the saltness of the water might enable the mariner to avoid running into unseen coasts or icebergs.

—It is thought that the demand for a cheap insulating material has been met by a discovery of a method by which wood, sawdust, cotton waste, paper pulp, and other fibrous substances can be converted into a material perfectly impervious to moisture and acids, easily molded under pressure into any shape, and capable of being worked into any form. This material is an excellent non-conductor of electricity, and can be used for all forms of battery cells, telegraph insulators, supports for electric-light leads and telephone work. It affords the means of securing perfect insulation at a very much less cost than ebonite or gutta-percha.—*Chicago Times.*

PITH AND POINT.

—People learn wisdom by experience. A man never wakes up his second baby to see it laugh.

—Some men are born slight, some achieve slightness, but most men have slights put upon them.

—Nantucket has a girl pilot only seventeen years old. Knows all the buoys in the sound, you can bet.—*Norristown Herald.*

—The Agricultural Bureau reports a short broom-corn crop this year, but the supply of mop-handles is unprecedented. No occasion to be alarmed.—*Detroit Free-Press.*

—A Vermont man found a pocketbook with $60 in it just before the war, and recently his conscience compelled him to restore the funds. Conscience is pretty thick down East.—*Burlington Hawkeye.*

—In a Paris shop devoted to feminine wearing apparel: "You ought to take this pair of stays, madame. They can not be worn out. None of my customers to whom I have sold a pair have ever wanted another."

—"Pa, are we going to have any girlvanized iron on our new house?" "Any w-h-a-t?" "Any girlvanized iron?" "Galvanized you mean, don't you?" "Yes, pa; but teacher says we mustn't say gal; it's girl!"—*Chicago Journal.*

—You can put "ten million oysters, when they are only two days old, into a four-quart pail filled with water." We believe this because we saw it in a newspaper, and we suppose if you took out about a pint of water you could get in about thirty million more oysters.—*New Haven Register.*

—"Is dis heah letter all right, boss?" asked an Austin darky, handing the clerk a letter he wanted to send off in the mail. The clerk weighed the letter and returned it, saying: "You want to put another stamp on it. It weighs too much." "Ef I puts another stamp on de letter dat won't make it no lighter. Dat's gwine ter make it weigh more."—*Texas Siftings.*

—Enthusiastic Teetotaler — "Dear Miss Madge, I am so delighted to find you have such an admiration for our cause." Æsthetic young lady—"No, I've an admiration for Sir Wilfrid, that's all. When you see in print such epithets applied to him as 'peregrinating pump-handle,' 'peripatetic agitator,' 'driveler of dreary drossiness,' it makes one really feel that he has done something to advance the poetry of literature in this country."

—"My wife," says Wigglesworth, abstractedly lifting a handful of prunes from the box, "is one of the most economical women I ever saw. Whenever I smoke a cigar in the house she makes me blow the smoke on her plants to kill the bugs, and stands ready to catch the ashes for tooth powder, while the stub that is left she soaks in water and treats the flower-pots to a Turkish bath with it."—*New Haven Register.*